Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 661—Chapter 251
"Firefighter Training and Certification"

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 100B.10 and 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 793

State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code chapter 100B and 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 793

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

September 23, 2025 9 to 9:30 a.m.	125 Public Conference Room Oran Pape State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Department of Public Safety no later than no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date of the public hearing. Comments should be directed to:

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Email: wagler@dps.state.ia.us

Purpose and Summary

Pursuant to Executive Order 10, the Department proposes rescinding Chapter 251 and adopting a new chapter in lieu thereof. The purpose of proposed Chapter 251 is to provide minimum training standards and certification standards for firefighters in Iowa. This rulemaking also incorporates an addition to the certification standards pursuant to 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 793.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**

- **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**

Any person wishing to pursue firefighter certification in Iowa will bear the cost.

- **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**

Firefighters in Iowa will benefit from clearly defined certification and training standards.

2. **Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:**

- **Quantitative description of impact:**

The cost to take a certification examination from the State is $50.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

Establishing minimum training and certification standards helps better equip firefighters in Iowa to prevent occupational accidents, injuries, illnesses, and deaths.

3. **Costs to the State:**

- **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**

No costs are associated with this rulemaking.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

There is no anticipated effect on State revenues.

4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**

The cost to take a certification examination is higher in many other states than it is in Iowa. As the number of incidents fire service personnel respond to increases, these training and certification standards help equip first responders with the necessary skills and tools needed to prevent occupational accidents, injuries, illnesses, and deaths.

5. **Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:**

The Department has determined this to be the least costly and least intrusive method for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking. The certification and accreditation program is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) to certify fire service personnel to accepted national standards. Standards for the certification and accreditation program are based upon nationally recognized standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

6. **Alternative methods considered by the agency:**

- **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**

No alternative methods were considered.

- **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**

Not applicable.

Small Business Impact

If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.
- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking's compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.
- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?

This rulemaking is not anticipated to have a substantial impact on small business.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind 661—Chapter 251 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 251
FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

661—251.1(100B) Definitions. The following definitions apply to rules 661—251.1(100B) to 661—251.204(100B):

"Emergency incident" means any incident involving a fire or other hazardous situation to which personnel of a fire department respond.

"NFPA" means the National Fire Protection Association.

"Structural firefighting" means firefighting in a hazardous environment that requires the use of self-contained breathing apparatus.

661—251.2 to **251.100** Reserved.

MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS

661—251.101(100B) Minimum training standard. Any member of a fire department will have completed the training requirements identified in the job performance requirements for the firefighter I classification in NFPA 1010 – 2024 edition, Standard on Professional Qualifications for Fire Fighters, based on the current edition adopted by the fire service training bureau, prior to the member's engaging in structural firefighting. Each fire department will identify its members who are or will be engaged in structural firefighting and ensure that any member engaged in structural firefighting has completed the training requirements specified in this rule prior to the member's engaging in structural firefighting.

NOTE: A firefighter is not required to be certified to meet this requirement. Training to meet this requirement may be provided by the fire service training bureau, a community college, a regional fire training facility, a local fire department, or any combination thereof.

EXCEPTION 1: A firefighter who received training that complied with the job performance requirements for the firefighter I classification contained in an earlier edition of NFPA 1001 is deemed to have met this requirement, provided that records documenting the training are maintained in accordance with rule 661—251.104(100B).

EXCEPTION 2: The chief or the training officer of any fire department may apply to the state fire marshal by June 1 of any year for an extension of the deadline to meet the training requirement for members of the department engaged in structural firefighting. Any such extension will be for one year and may be renewed annually upon application. An extension will be granted only if the department has requested training required under this rule, with training costs to be offset through funding from the firefighting training and equipment fund, pursuant to 661—Chapter 259, and funds to offset the cost of the training have not been available or have been inadequate to fully offset the cost of the training. The extension may be for all or some of the firefighters in the department. The application is to be in a form specified by the state fire marshal and will list by name each firefighter for whom an extension is requested. The extension, if granted, will list by name the firefighters to whom the extension applies and will apply only to those listed.

661—251.102(100B) Other training. Any member of a fire department who serves in a capacity other than structural firefighting at an emergency incident will have received training based on the duties the member might perform at an emergency incident. Training to meet this requirement may be provided by the fire service training bureau, a community college, a regional fire training facility, or a local fire department, or any combination thereof.

661—251.103(100B) Continuing training. Fire department members will participate in at least 24 hours of continuing training annually, which may include but is not limited to the following subject matter areas:

1. Personal protective equipment and respiratory protection.
2. Structural firefighting techniques, including standard operating policies and procedures or standard operating guidelines.
3. Ground ladders.
4. Hose and hose appliances.
5. Ventilation.

6. Forcible entry.
7. Search and rescue techniques.
8. Firefighter safety.
9. National Incident Management System or Incident Command System.
10. Emergency vehicle driver-operator.
11. Hazardous materials first responder—operations level.
12. Emergency medical service (EMS) training.
13. Additional training based on standard operating policies and procedures or standard operating guidelines.
14. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-related training, such as blood-borne pathogen protection.
15. Specialty training such as confined space entry, vehicle extrication, rescue techniques, wildland or agricultural firefighting techniques.
16. Emergency response to terrorism.
17. Any other training designed to meet local training needs.

NOTE: Training to meet this requirement may be provided by the fire service training bureau, a community college, a regional fire training facility, or a local fire department, or any combination thereof.

661—251.104(100B) Recordkeeping. Each fire department will maintain training records for each individual member of the department who participates in emergency incidents. These training records will identify, for all training completed by the individual firefighter, the person or persons who provided the training, the dates during which the training was completed, the location or locations where the training was delivered, and a description of the content of the training.

661—251.105 to **251.200** Reserved.

FIREFIGHTER CERTIFICATION

661—251.201(100B) Firefighter certification and accreditation program. There is established within the fire service training bureau of the state fire marshal division a firefighter certification program for the state of Iowa, known as the certification and accreditation program. The certification and accreditation program is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) to certify fire service personnel to accepted national standards. All certifications issued by the certification and accreditation program will be based upon nationally accepted standards.

NOTE 1: Participation in the certification and accreditation program is voluntary, and state law does not require certification to work or volunteer as a firefighter in Iowa. However, some fire departments within the state require certification for continued employment or promotion. Inquiries regarding such requirements should be directed to the hiring or employing department.

NOTE 2: Inquiries and requests regarding the certification and accreditation program should be directed to the fire service training bureau.

251.201(1) *Eligibility.* Any person seeking certification through the certification and accreditation program will be a current member of a fire, emergency, or rescue organization within the state of Iowa or enrolled in a fire science program within the Iowa college system and at least 18 years of age.

EXCEPTION: Persons not meeting the requirement of membership in a fire, emergency, or rescue organization may be granted exceptions to this requirement on an individual basis. Individuals seeking such exceptions will address these requests to the fire service training bureau.

251.201(2) *Registration.* Registration forms for each level of firefighter certification may be obtained from the fire service training bureau. In order to enter the certification and accreditation program, a candidate will submit a completed registration, accompanied by the required fee, to the fire

service training bureau. The registration and fee will be submitted no less than two weeks prior to the date of any examination in which the candidate wishes to participate.

661—251.202(100B) Certification standards. Standards for the certification and accreditation program are based upon nationally recognized standards established by the NFPA. Certification at each level in the Iowa fire service certification system results in national certification.

251.202(1) *Firefighter.*

a. Firefighter I. Certification as a firefighter I is based upon the requirements for firefighter I certification established in NFPA 1010 – 2024 edition, "Standard on Professional Qualification for Fire Fighters."

b. Firefighter II. Firefighter II. Certification as a firefighter II is based upon the requirements for firefighter II certification established in NFPA 1010 – 2024 edition, "Standard on Professional Qualifications for Fire Fighters."

251.202(2) *Driver/operator.*

a. Driver/operator (pumper). Certification as a driver/operator (pumper) is based upon the requirements for fire department vehicle driver/operator (pumper) certification established in NFPA 1010 – 2024 edition, "Standard on Professional Qualification for Fire Fighters."

b. Driver/operator (aerial). Certification as a driver/operator (aerial) is based upon the requirements for fire department vehicle driver/operator (aerial) certification established in NFPA 1010 – 2024 edition, "Standard on Professional Qualifications for Fire Fighters."

251.202(3) *Fire officer.*

a. Fire officer I. Certification as a fire officer I is based upon the requirements for fire officer I certification established in NFPA 1021 – 2020 edition, "Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications."

b. Fire officer II. Certification as a fire officer II is based upon the requirements for fire officer II certification established in NFPA 1021 – 2020 edition, "Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications."

251.202(4) *Fire inspector.* Certification as a fire inspector is based upon the requirements for certification as a fire inspector established in NFPA 1030 – 2024 edition, "Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Prevention Programs."

251.202(5) *Fire investigator.* Certification as a fire investigator is based upon the requirements for certification as a fire investigator established in NFPA 1033 – 2022 edition, "Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator."

251.202(6) *Fire and emergency services instructor.*

a. Fire and emergency services instructor I. Certification as a fire and emergency services instructor I is based upon the requirements for certification as a fire and emergency services instructor I established in NFPA 1041 – 2019 edition, "Standard for Fire and Emergency Services Instructor Professional Qualifications."

b. Fire and emergency services instructor II. Certification as a fire and emergency services instructor II is based upon the requirements for certification as a fire and emergency services instructor II established in NFPA 1041 – 2019 edition, "Standard for Fire and Emergency Services Instructor Professional Qualifications."

251.202(7) *Live fire instructor.*

a. Live fire instructor. Certification as a live fire instructor is based upon the requirements for certification as a live fire instructor established in NFPA 1041 – 2019 edition "Standard for Fire and Emergency Services Instructor Professional Qualifications."

b. Live fire instructor in charge. Certification as a live fire instructor in charge is based upon the requirements for certification as a live fire instructor in charge established in NFPA 1041 – 2019 edition "Standard for Fire and Emergency Services Instructor Professional Qualifications."

251.202(8) *Responder to hazardous materials incidents.*

a. Responder to hazardous materials incidents at the awareness level. Certification as a responder to hazardous materials incidents (awareness) is based on the requirements established in NFPA 470 – 2022 edition, "Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Standard for Responders."

b. Responder to hazardous materials incidents at the operations level. Certification as a responder to hazardous materials incidents (operations) is based upon the requirements established in NFPA 470 – 2022 edition, "Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Standard for Responders."

661—251.203(100B) Fees.

251.203(1) The fee for each certification is $50. These fees can be found on the fire service training bureau's web page and also within the publication Certification Procedures Guide for each level of certification, published by the fire service training bureau. The information in each guide is effective upon publication until superseded by publication of a later edition. Prospective candidates who are considering application for a particular level of certification should contact the fire service training bureau for the latest date of publication of the Certification Procedures Guide.

251.203(2) Fees may be paid by personal credit card or check made payable to Iowa Department of Public Safety—Fire Service Training Bureau, credit card or check from a public agency or private organization, or money order. The check, credit card information, money order or draft will be submitted with the application.

661—251.204(100B) Certification, denial, and revocation of certification.

251.204(1) *Certification.* Upon completion of the requirements for certification, the applicant's name will be entered into the Iowa certification database maintained by the fire service training bureau for the respective level of certification and into the certification databases maintained by the Pro Board and the IFSAC. Individuals who successfully complete the certification requirements will receive an individualized certificate awarding national certification from the fire service training bureau, which will bear numbered seals from the Pro Board and the IFSAC, and additional insignia from the fire service training bureau.

251.204(2) *Denial of certification.* Certification will be denied to any applicant who fails to meet all of the requirements for the type of certification, who knowingly submits false information to the fire service training bureau, or who engages in fraudulent activity during the certification process.

251.204(3) *Revocation.* The fire service training bureau may revoke the certification of any individual who is found to have knowingly provided false information to the fire service training bureau during the certification process or to have engaged in fraudulent activity during the certification process. In addition, certification may be revoked by the fire service training bureau if an individual was found to have engaged in and been convicted of a felony-level crime, including but not limited to murder, arson, sexual assault, physical assault, embezzlement, and crimes committed against a fire department or its respective association.

251.204(4) *Appeals.* Any person who is denied certification or whose certification is revoked may appeal the denial or revocation. An appeal of a denial or revocation of certification will be made to the commissioner of public safety within 30 days of the issuance of the denial or revocation using the contested case procedures specified in rules 661—10.301(17A) through 661—10.332(17A).

251.204(5) *Sex offender registry.* Pursuant to 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 793, a person who has committed any crime as an adult that resulted in the requirement that the person be listed on a sex offender registry will not be certified as a firefighter and will not serve as a noncertified or volunteer firefighter.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 100B.